

Community Character

Introduction

Coconino County features a rich mosaic of communities, residents, and physical attributes. Residents and property owners have expressed considerable interest in maintaining diverse **LANDSCAPES** and improving the aesthetics of their home. A community’s character is defined by its design, its viewsheds, its gathering places, and its historic and cultural resources, as well as by environmental characteristics such as natural quiet and dark night skies. Maintaining this character is important—not only for promoting economic development and attracting visitors, but also for protecting our living spaces and culturally significant areas. In addition, preserving **RURAL CHARACTER** is a core value of many residents in unincorporated communities.

This Element describes the factors that combine to create community character in our county. It also discusses the ordinances, regulations, and other mechanisms that help us to protect the community characteristics we value.

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The Conservation Framework Relationship

This Element relates specifically to the *Landscape Principle* of the **CONSERVATION FRAMEWORK**, which explores how ecological impacts from human use depend upon the size, shape, intensity, and location of **DEVELOPMENT**. The **CONSERVATION GUIDELINES**—in particular, guidelines **B & C**—address the importance of incorporating conservation design principles, minimizing noise pollution, and preserving scenic vistas, corridors, and viewsheds. They provide the framework for protecting our valued community characteristics by ensuring that new developments are compatible with existing communities and the **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**.

Our Purpose & Vision

In keeping with our vision for Coconino County’s future, this Community Character Element seeks to define, preserve, and enhance the quality of the places where we live, work, and enjoy our leisure time. Its goals include protecting the unique characteristics of our communities and providing facilities and services that support community-based activities. Its policies promote areas of concentrated activity in rural communities and improve the aesthetic character of the county’s commercial, industrial, residential, and **GATEWAY** areas. They also preserve the county’s historic, cultural, and architectural heritage; protect ecological landscapes; and enhance scenic vistas, viewsheds, and byways. Other policies encourage the coordination of land use planning, the sharing of resources, and the protection of **SACRED SITES** between area tribes and the County. Finally, this Element contains policies for minimizing noise and light pollution.



Community Design

SEE ALSO

APPENDIX C

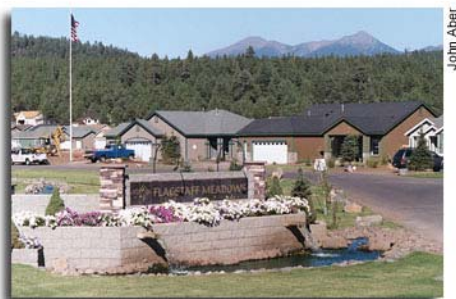
County Communities Overview

DESIGN REVIEW OVERLAY

An overlay district applied to specific geographic boundaries (typically within an Area Plan) which establishes guidelines for new commercial, industrial, public, and semipublic uses. DROs require a review and approval process for exterior design, materials, textures, colors, signs, lighting, fencing, and landscaping but do not apply to single-family residential construction.

Each community has distinct features that contribute to its physical character. Many of these features reflect common values for preserving a community's **RURAL CHARACTER**⁵⁶, appearance, natural resources, **OPEN SPACES**, recreation areas, scenic views, vegetation, architecture, development patterns, and **RURAL ACTIVITY CENTERS**. These features promote quality of life and economic well-being. Preserving them should not prohibit **DEVELOPMENT**; however, the County needs to consider them to ensure that new development fits the existing community fabric.

County residents have demonstrated a desire for well-designed communities through their plans and actions. As of 2002, ten communities had detailed **AREA PLANS**; half included **DESIGN REVIEW OVERLAYS (DROs)** which help to integrate new commercial buildings into the fabric of the existing community or into a desired future vision. Many communities have visions for growth that include enhanced design and building compatibility. We can do more to improve the quality of our physical environment by using natural resources and designing communities in a way that better conserves local **LANDSCAPES**. Improving standards for commercial and residential development enhances a community's image and pride. However, design guidelines should not be cost-prohibitive. As of 2002, the County maintained five separate DROs that require the **PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION** to review all new commercial, industrial, public, and semipublic development. Review criteria cover architectural style, building materials and colors, overall site design, signage, **LANDSCAPING**, and lighting. The DRO process allows the public to provide input on how to best incorporate structures into the community, starting from the initial stages of development. Communities with DROs include Kachina Village, Mountainaire, Oak Creek Canyon, Doney Park, and Tusayan.



Commercial development patterns vary not only according to the ordinances in effect at the time of development, but also to community needs and targeted business markets. For example, most commercial development in the Marble Canyon/Vermilion Cliffs area targets Grand Canyon visitors, rafters, and fly fishers. Many communities have unique characteristics that help attract tourists. Most commercial uses, whether tourist- or neighborhood-oriented, want the best visibility through signage or unique building features to attract business. However, this need should not detract from the surrounding communities or natural features. For this reason, the County maintains development

standards for commercial, industrial, public and semipublic uses that address landscaping, signage, lighting, parking, setbacks, and screening. Only commercial uses that are developed within a DRO community are reviewed for overall site design, architectural features, building materials, and colors.

SEE ALSO

PAGE 88

Land Use: Residential – Lot Splits

SEE ALSO

PAGE 20

The Conservation Framework: Integrated Conservation Design

A neighborhood's **ZONING** and land configuration greatly affects its character. In Coconino County, the character of residential developments varies significantly depending on how and when they were created. Areas developed as **LOT SPLITS**, for example, are often haphazard and lack a planned **CIRCULATION SYSTEM** and adequate infrastructure improvements. Likewise, because many **SUBDIVISIONS** created during the land-speculation era of the 1960s and 1970s were poorly planned, they lack the necessary roadway and utility infrastructure. Market conditions determine the type of housing that residents purchase; choices range from large, single-family homes to manufactured homes and travel trailers. Seasonally occupied residences also influence community character. Area Plans encourage “cluster” development and **INTEGRATED CONSERVATION DESIGN**, which exchanges smaller lot sizes for permanently dedicated open space.



GATEWAYS are unique areas that warrant special design considerations. Coconino County has two types—“gateway corridors” and “gateway communities.” Gateway corridors include **ARTERIAL ROADWAYS** that provide access into an existing community or **NATURAL AREA**. These roadways are often desirable for tourist-oriented commercial enterprises because they carry high volumes of traffic. Gateway corridors include Highway 180 or old Route 66 into Flagstaff and Highway 64 going into Williams or Valle. These corridors should be protected from strip commercial development or excessive off-site signage (the County has already prohibited new billboards). Gateway communities include both commercial and residential developments adjacent to national parks, monuments, and recreation areas, as well as along highways leading to such areas. The most prominent gateway community in Coconino County is Tusayan, located adjacent to the Grand Canyon National Park. DRO provisions should be used to evaluate the architectural features and site design for new gateway development. This will help ensure that this development does not detract from natural scenic areas or community character.

Goal: **Develop thriving communities and improve the aesthetic character of commercial, industrial, residential, and gateway areas.**

Policies:

1. At the request of communities and with priority for gateway communities, the County shall assist with the development of DROs to assure a logical arrangement of buildings, provide appropriate screening and landscaping, and maintain compatible building forms and materials. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, B, C*
2. To preserve rural character and environmentally sensitive landscapes, the County encourages the use of conservation design techniques such as clustering and the transfer of development rights for both residential and commercial development. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, B, D, E, G, H*
3. The County encourages incorporating sustainable building design guidelines and provisions for the use of alternative energy sources in construction and community design standards. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: G, H, I*
4. The County encourages private property maintenance and proactive enforcement of performance standards in both residential and commercial areas.
5. The County encourages developing residential areas in and around gateway communities to provide for residents and for employees of local enterprises. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE: G*
6. The County favors the use of environmentally sensitive design techniques. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, B, C, E, G, I*
7. As a means to appropriately accommodate future growth and development, the County shall continue to coordinate with local residents in the preparation, adoption, and/or update of Area Plans that provide more specific policies and guidelines for individual communities and unique geographic areas. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, K*



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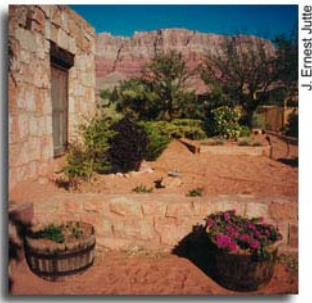
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8. Development projects should be considered in relation to the existing scale and character of the surrounding area and benefits for the community and county. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, K*
9. Where feasible, the establishment of intensive land uses within existing communities should be compatible and integrated into the area through appropriate mitigation measures like buffering, density transitions, landscaping, or increased setbacks.
10. The County encourages the preservation of rare and significant natural and historic resources, unique community characteristics, and desirable land development patterns. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, B, C*
11. Public and semipublic uses shall be approved at locations convenient to the population being served provided that such locations are compatible with the desirable characteristics of surrounding neighborhoods.
12. Public input from individual neighborhoods and communities shall be considered in defining the existing and historical character of those areas.
13. Developers are encouraged to gather and integrate local public input into the early design phase of their projects.



RURAL ACTIVITY CENTER

A centralized, concentrated area of locally oriented commercial, public, and semipublic services and activities.

MULTIMODALISM

A holistic view of circulation in which individual modes work together or within their own niches to provide users with the best choices of service. Multimodalism considers how policies for a single mode affect all other modes.

Rural Activity Centers

RURAL ACTIVITY CENTERS are areas of concentrated activity where community services and circulation infrastructure often converge.⁵⁷ Land uses in these centers are commercial, public, and semipublic; they vary depending on the characteristics and needs of the area. Their aesthetic characteristics include site and building design, signage, lighting, landscaping, and circulation access. Especially along major highways, clustering in one central location is preferred over strip development, which creates a cluttered appearance, causes circulation problems, and negatively impacts **RURAL CHARACTER**.

Because rural activity centers bring many uses together, their supporting infrastructure should promote **MULTIMODAL** and nonmotorized transportation opportunities. Circulation infrastructure must also be considered in the design of adjacent properties. Not only should these designs specify how sites will connect to the existing road network, but they should also address possible shared parking and/or driveway access points. This is an important safety consideration, since the potential for conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians increases in congested areas.

As populations expand, common community gathering places becomes essential for group communication and activities. Facilities that provide common neighborhood space—such as rural convenience stores and post offices—play a role in defining a community's character. Several **SUBDIVISIONS** have included community activity centers in accordance with their development plans. In addition, facilities such as fire stations, churches, and schools effectively serve a double function as local gathering places.

Other than the annual County Fair, few community activities occur on a countywide level because our population is so dispersed. Many activities occur locally, fostering connections between community members and raising a community's visibility as a special place.⁵⁸ Local organizations, recreational opportunities, and activities such as holiday parades, local festivals, and art or antique shows all promote a sense of community. Even in the most rural areas, they should be encouraged whenever possible.



Goal: Support the development of concentrated commercial and civic land uses that meet residents' needs.

Policies:

14. The concentration of commercial, public and semipublic uses in activity centers is desirable and encouraged by the County for the creation of a tight knit, well defined, highly useable area for surrounding residents.
15. Improvements to circulation infrastructure in rural activity centers shall reflect the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhoods.
16. The County supports the development of neighborhood commercial uses, community facilities and activities that generate public interaction.
17. Community facilities and activities that promote a greater sense of community identity and local pride are supported.

Tribal Lands & Interests

Coconino County is unique because many indigenous peoples live here and maintain a strong connection to their heritage and land. These communities are precious resources. The County must work with tribal governments to explore mutually beneficial solutions to development issues. Such cooperation is especially important for protecting tribal interests that might be affected by regional development or development near tribal lands.

Portions of five Native American reservations—Navajo, Hopi, Havasupai, Hualapai, and Kaibab-Paiute—covered 38.1 percent of the total land in Coconino County in 2003. One additional tribe, the San Juan Southern Paiute, was residing on the Navajo Reservation as of 2003 until it could establish a new reservation in the county. Tribes are sovereign nations with independent governments; each has a distinct cultural history and relationship with the land.

Tribes can own both trust lands and **FEE-SIMPLE** (privately owned) lands. Reservation lands are classified as trust lands because the federal government holds them in trust. As such, these lands must comply with certain federal regulations, such as those administered by the **U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)** or those related to the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, even though the tribe may have authority for enforcing them. Trust lands are not subject to local or County authority for planning and **ZONING** purposes. Within reservation boundaries, tribal land allotments can be granted to individual members or families for their personal use. Many tribes also own fee-simple lands. Like other landowners, tribes have the right to sell, give away, trade, lease, or dispose of these lands using any manner of legal conveyance. Fee-simple lands fall under zoning requirements and land use regulations.

The County recognizes that tribes must use their lands to benefit their communities and governments. Consequently, it commits to developing the solid, working relationships that are essential to resolving planning and land use issues in a manner that is mutually beneficial. Tribal governments are like any other local municipality except that their structures vary. Local and tribal governments frequently share resources or work together to provide resources jointly. Maintaining infrastructure can be difficult because equipment and other resources are dispersed through the

SEE ALSO APPENDIX C

County Communities Overview
– Native American Tribes



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reservation's vast geographic extent. In such cases, working with local entities who provide such services is beneficial. In 2002, for example, the County had a **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING** with the Navajo Nation and the **BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS** for transferring solid waste and another for maintaining reservation roads. The County can build on its existing level of cooperation with the tribes to establish mutually beneficial partnerships in the future.

Most tribes have culturally significant sites located outside of their reservations. Some of these sites are considered sacred because of their importance to a historical tribal event, a traditional event, or a process. Because significant federal legislation pertains to **SACRED SITES**, they are addressed separately from other archaeological resources. The 1978 *American Indian Religious Freedom Act* protects and preserves the rights of Native Americans to believe, express, and exercise their traditional religions; its provisions grant access to sacred sites on federal land and allow tribes to access sacred objects on federal land. The *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966* includes provisions for preserving tribal historic resources as well as making traditional religious or cultural properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1996, President Clinton issued an *Executive Order on Indian Sacred Sites*, which recommends that federal land managers, to the extent practical, accommodate access to and ceremonial use of sacred sites.

This legislation pertains only to federal lands, however. Many tribes consider other lands within Coconino County to be culturally significant. Some of these sites—such as the San Francisco Peaks—are commonly recognized; other locations are held in confidence to protect them from desecration.

Goal: Acknowledge the unique tribal government entities and promote coordination of planning efforts.

Policies:

18. The County encourages expanding cooperation with local tribal governments on all land use planning issues, development projects, and infrastructure development. SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, E, F, G, K
19. The County supports preservation of tribal sacred sites and recognizes these resources as assets to our cultural heritage and history.



Historic & Cultural Resources

Historic and cultural/archaeological sites are nonrenewable resources that help establish a community's character. These amenities tell us how land was used historically and how cultures were able to sustain communities in an arid environment with varied climatic conditions. Archaeological resources record the history of ancient peoples—their languages, dress, shelter, food, transportation modes and routes, religions, recreation, governments, and families.

As development continues, it becomes increasingly important to consider how to preserve our history and culture. **HISTORIC PRESERVATION** efforts such as inventorying the county's significant sites are crucial. Inventories leave us with a substantial record of the past detailing how humans interacted with the landscape and each other. Without such inventories, we lack an important tool to protect these resources and we risk their irreparable destruction. Preserving them not only increases opportunities for education and scientific research, but it also offers economic benefits.



Most preservation activities in Coconino County have been completed by land management agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, the Arizona State Land Department, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and tribes. A variety of legislation requires federal and state land managers to inventory and preserve archaeological and historical sites to the degree possible—the *American Antiquities Act of 1906*, the *National Historic Preservation Act*, the *Archaeological Resources Protection Act*, the **NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)**, and the *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act*. On the other hand, few preservation requirements have been established for private lands, either on the state or local level. Arizona passed two laws in 1990 to protect human burials and associated grave goods (such as jewelry or pottery) on both state and private lands. On private lands, owners must notify the Arizona State Museum if they discover human remains or intend to disturb a known burial site. Landowners are encouraged to assist in paying for excavation and reburial, but are not required to do so. Additionally, this law prohibits selling excavated objects.

The *National Historic Preservation Act* established the National Register of Historic Places, the nation's official listing of prehistoric and historic properties worthy of preservation. As of 2002, this register listed 29 structures and archaeological sites, as well as 29 historic districts, in Coconino County. Fifty sites in Coconino County were listed under the *Arizona State Historic Preservation Act*, including portions of old Route 66, various archaeological sites, buildings, bridges and other structures, and historic districts. Still, many resources in unincorporated areas of the county have not been listed. Such resources reflect early settlements and historic land uses through buildings, sites, **HISTORIC TRAILS**, and roads.

Cities and Counties may apply to the **STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (SHPO)** for **CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG)** status, which makes them eligible for assistance and funding that they can use to create local preservation programs. In 2002, Coconino County had three CLGs: the City of Flagstaff, the City of Williams, and the City of Sedona. The County is not required to be a CLG to recognize historic structures or seek the protection of a property. Most preservation efforts are undertaken by individuals and small groups who focus on specific properties or local landmarks. The County should support private efforts whenever possible by sharing information, helping to coordinate activities, or making the most of existing resources.

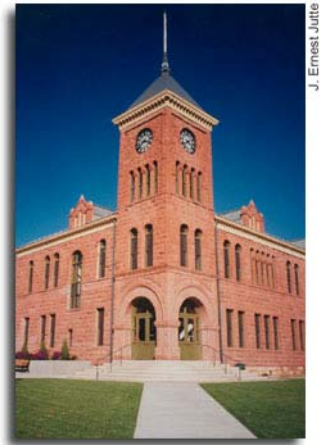
Goal: **Protect the county's historic, cultural, and architectural heritage.**

Policies:

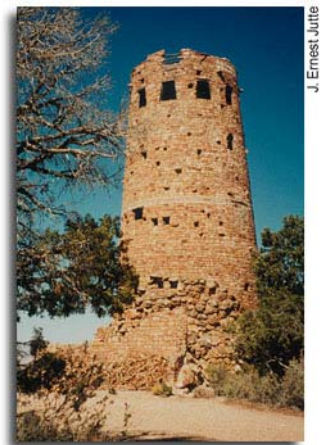
20. The County encourages the preservation and celebration of cultural diversity and creativity as well as the protection of historic and archaeological resources.
21. The County supports the commemoration of local culture and heritage through public art, local exhibitions, and signage to direct and inform residents and visitors about important places and events.

Heritage Areas & Landscape Preservation

Several of the county's unique **HERITAGE AREAS** and vast, uninterrupted landscapes have significant cultural and environmental resources that deserve preservation. Heritage areas include natural features, **CULTURAL LANDSCAPES**, cultural monuments, or **HISTORIC TRAIL** systems; they may also reflect historic land use patterns. Coconino County is home to one of this country's 18 World Heritage Sites—Grand Canyon National Park—designated by the World Heritage Committee of the **UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC & CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)**. The county also contains a few congressionally designated National Heritage Areas or Corridors that are not national parks but nevertheless are of significant cultural, natural, or recreational importance. As of 2002, Route 66 was under pending congressional legislation for consideration as a National Heritage



J. Ernest Jutte



J. Ernest Jutte



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HERITAGE AREA

An area or site where cultural monuments, natural areas or features, historic trail systems, or historic land use patterns may have cultural significance, provide a physical link to historic events, or be of exceptional value.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

A visual demonstration of traditional interactions between humans and the natural environment over time.



Corridor. Other areas that could warrant future listing at the state or local level include Marble Canyon/Vermilion Cliffs, Oak Creek Canyon, Mormon Lake, and Stoneman Lake.

Goal: Preserve local heritage areas and cultural landscapes.

Policies:

22. Within heritage areas, the County favors development projects that protect and incorporate cultural and natural resources features of the site and surrounding area. SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: B, C
23. The County places a high priority on large landscape preservation especially when planning for new growth areas. SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, B, C, E

Scenic Vistas & Viewsheds

A central part of a community's overall character, natural scenery can have dramatic effects on property values and tourist revenues. As communities develop, it becomes in-



creasingly important to preserve the unique features that distinguish an area—its rock formations, mountain backdrops, forests, **RIPARIAN AREAS**, meadows, or expansive **OPEN SPACES**. To protect these resources, we need to understand how they affect surrounding communities. The first step in this process is identifying the resources, a step that requires public involvement. Tools that can help us achieve this goal include maps, field observations, surveys, and photographs (including aerial photographs). We can also compare past, present, and—through imaging—future environments. After identifying these resources, we can develop tools to maintain and enhance their scenic qualities.

SEE ALSO PAGES 50 & 51

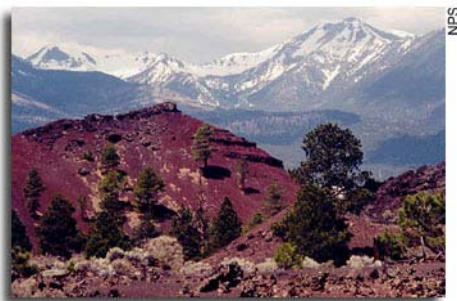
Community Services:
Utilities Services & Corridors
and Telecommunications
Infrastructure

The County needs to consider how proposed development in critical areas affects scenic vistas and viewsheds. Residents have expressed concerns about signage, hillside development, cell towers, utility lines, and the removal of native vegetation. The County is already addressing some of these concerns through ordinances such as the *Wireless Telecommunication Facilities Ordinance*, which provides guidelines for siting cellular towers and antennas.⁵⁹ The County has also prohibited new billboards or other off-site signage, and it coordinates compatible on-site signage through DRO and formal approval processes.

SEE ALSO PAGES 24 & 43

Natural Environment:
Environmentally Sensitive Lands
and Public Safety: Floods,
Earthquakes, & Slopes

Ridgeline development offers scenic views but may impact surrounding residential and **NATURAL AREAS**. This highly visible development presents architectural and grading constraints that can impact an area's aesthetic and ecological values. Poorly planned roads and driveways leave permanent scars and may cause **EROSION** problems. Structures built on steep slopes can appear massive and detract from the **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**. Although, as of 2003, the County had no ordinance focusing on ridgeline or hillside development, the *Subdivision Ordinance* specifies requirements for buildable areas on steeply sloped lots,



and the *Grading and Excavation Ordinance* addresses building sites and roadways. Sensitive architectural and site design techniques can help reduce the visual impact of hillside structures. These techniques include using “step-down” designs, limiting the height of stem walls or piers, incorporating windows or vegetation, and excavating along landform or natural contours to reduce scarring, erosion, and other physical hazards. However, the most significant safeguard that a hillside development ordinance can provide is incentive for not developing in these areas at all. Such incentives could allow owners to **TRANSFER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**; they could also provide tax breaks for those who donate land or easements for scenic and ecological **CONSERVATION** purposes.



Goal: Preserve and enhance the integrity of the county's scenic resources.

Policies:

24. The County favors the underground placement of utilities, wherever feasible and in coordination with ACC guidelines, in all major developments and subdivisions.
25. To reduce impacts on views from surrounding open space, recreation sites, and residential areas, structures and infrastructure shall be planned and built in a manner that minimizes visual impacts on important horizon and ridgelines.
26. The County supports the use of integrated conservation design to reduce impacts on scenic vistas and environmentally sensitive lands by transferring development rights to less sensitive lands. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: A, B, C, E*
27. To maintain the county's unique natural beauty, the County supports the protection of undeveloped ridgelines and hillsides through the use of sensitive design and development techniques. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: B, C*
28. The County encourages the preservation of natural vegetation and materials and revegetation with indigenous plants on sites disturbed by development projects. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: D, F, H, I*
29. The County supports the removal of nonconforming off-site signage.

Scenic Corridors

Coconino County is home to some of the most spectacular scenery in the Southwest, and our roadway system provides direct access into and through many of these areas. The **FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA)** has established programs that officially recognize routes containing intrinsic scenic or historic features. One such program is the National **SCENIC BYWAY** Program. Highways with outstanding scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, and/or natural qualities can be designated either National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads. As of 2003, Arizona had no designated All-American Roads and only one National Scenic Byway—SR 67 from Jacob Lake to the north rim of the Grand Canyon, a 42-mile route designated as the “Kaibab Plateau–North Rim Parkway.”

The State of Arizona and the Forest Service administer similar programs. Since 1982, Arizona's Scenic Byways Program has recognized roads that contain exceptional scenic and historic qualities. Six of these are partially or completely located within Coconino County: the Fredonia–Vermilion Cliffs Scenic Road, the Kaibab Plateau–North Rim Parkway, the Sedona–Oak Creek Canyon Scenic Road, the Red Rock Scenic Road, the San Francisco Peaks Scenic Road, and Historic Route 66.⁶⁰

Both the federal and state designations are meant to promote tourism; educate the traveling public about the road's outstanding natural, historic, and visual resources; and encourage the preservation of the quality of surrounding **LANDSCAPES**. Federal and state grant money is available for planning, enhancing, and promoting scenic byways. Before designating a roadway as scenic, the FHWA requires a Corridor Management Plan. In addition, the roadway must meet specific criteria. Likewise, the State of Arizona requires an evaluation report that must ultimately be approved by the Parkways, Historic, and



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Scenic Roads Advisory Committee and the State Transportation Board. Because the designation process must be initiated on a local level, it demonstrates a community that values its surrounding landscape and its cultural and historic features.

Goal: Protect and enhance scenic corridors.

Policies:

30. With consideration for countywide issues and the determination of local community priority, the County encourages designations of new scenic corridors with cultural and historic features.
31. Development projects along existing scenic byways must demonstrate compatibility within the context of the scenic byway designation.



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Dark Skies

Because our topography and atmospheric conditions are uniquely suited for astronomical observation, researchers have made substantial investment in observatories. This is especially significant because the number of quality astronomical sites in the United States is decreasing rapidly because of light **POLLUTION**. Coconino County is also home to artist James Turrell's "natural observatory" at Roden Crater, a celebrated project that relies heavily on naturally dark night skies.



Chris Luginbuhl

County residents increasingly value star-filled night skies for their inspirational beauty. To ensure that our skies remain dark, the County and the City of Flagstaff collaborated with local observatories and other dark-sky proponents to develop lighting ordinances that are among the most progressive in the United States. The goal of these ordinances is to cap the overall amount and limit stray light while allowing enough light for safety. (Poorly designed lighting wastes energy and causes glare that decreases visibility and public safety.) Coconino County and Flagstaff have been internationally recognized for these efforts. In 2001, Flagstaff became the first "International Dark-Sky City."

Goal: Preserve dark night skies.

Policies:

32. To preserve dark night skies, the County shall be a model of good outdoor lighting practices, and likewise supports the efforts of others in retrofitting nonconforming and/or inappropriate lighting in a manner consistent with County lighting codes. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: I, K*
33. Property owners are encouraged to install only the level of outdoor lighting necessary for safety, security, and utility purposes while limiting light trespass onto neighboring properties. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: I, K*
34. Full shielding of all outdoor lighting, installation of low-pressure sodium fixtures, and the use of other best available technologies are encouraged. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE: I*
35. Areas near existing professional observatories or other dark-sky preserves shall be developed with special consideration for the impacts that development may have on astronomical observing conditions.



Natural Quiet

Another desirable community characteristic is natural quiet. Protecting natural soundscapes is becoming a serious issue in many national parks, **NATURAL AREAS**, and tourist areas. Air traffic over the Grand Canyon, for example, has dramatically altered the natural soundscape of the park, affecting visitors, local residents, and wildlife.

This issue is also important on a countywide level. On a daily basis, most residents are subjected to a wide variety of noise from roads, **OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES**, aircraft, railroads, commercial and industrial land uses, and neighborhoods. Residents have expressed interest in developing a noise ordinance that implements time guidelines and reasonableness standards. Noise should be considered when reviewing plans for new commercial and industrial developments, especially those located close to residential, **OPEN SPACE**, or recreation areas. Transportation noise can be mitigated using landscaped buffers or increased setbacks in residential areas adjoining major arterials, highways, and railways.

Goal: **Preserve natural quiet and reduce the effects of noise pollution.**

Policies:

36. The impacts of noise generated by major commercial or industrial uses should be considered when reviewing development projects, especially when adjacent to residential and recreation areas. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE: I*
37. Major developments and subdivisions shall consider the impacts of adjacent noise generators such as highways, railways, and airports, and mitigate for those impacts where feasible. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE: I*
38. In order to provide areas of natural quiet for all residents and visitors, the County supports efforts of local communities and the Federal Aviation Administration to establish flight restrictions and no-flight zones over national monuments and wilderness areas. *SEE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE: I*



Grant Cooper



DANIEL H. BURNHAM

"Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistency."

